

Alexander Brown, Port Stanley, Ontario.

October 6, 1893.

Aged 31 years, and has been fishing about 16 years. He and his brothers are working a large fishery here, there being only one other party here, Capt. Ellison. The firm name is Brown Bros. They operate 7 pound nets in the neighborhood, and have 1 steam tug.

Between Long Point and Rondeau they use practically nothing but pound nets in the fishery. Knows of no gill nets in use in that area. One seine has been used some in the spring and fall at Port Bruce, but cannot say whether it is employed now or not.

Herring and blue pickerel are the fish chiefly taken in this region.

Between Long Point and Rondeau (not including nets of the Long Point Co.) there are now about 60 pounds set. They are owned mainly in lots of 3 to 5 to a person or firm, but some persons control or fish larger numbers.

He operates 7 pounds; Capt. Ellison 14 pounds.

The pot of these pounds averages about 26 feet square.

The pots are set in 25 to 35 feet water. The depth of the pot ranges from 22 to 26 feet. The bottom of the pot is, therefore, 3 or more feet above the bottom of the lake where set.

The leader ranges in length from 50 to 80 rods.

The mesh in the leader may be 6 or 7 inches, extension.

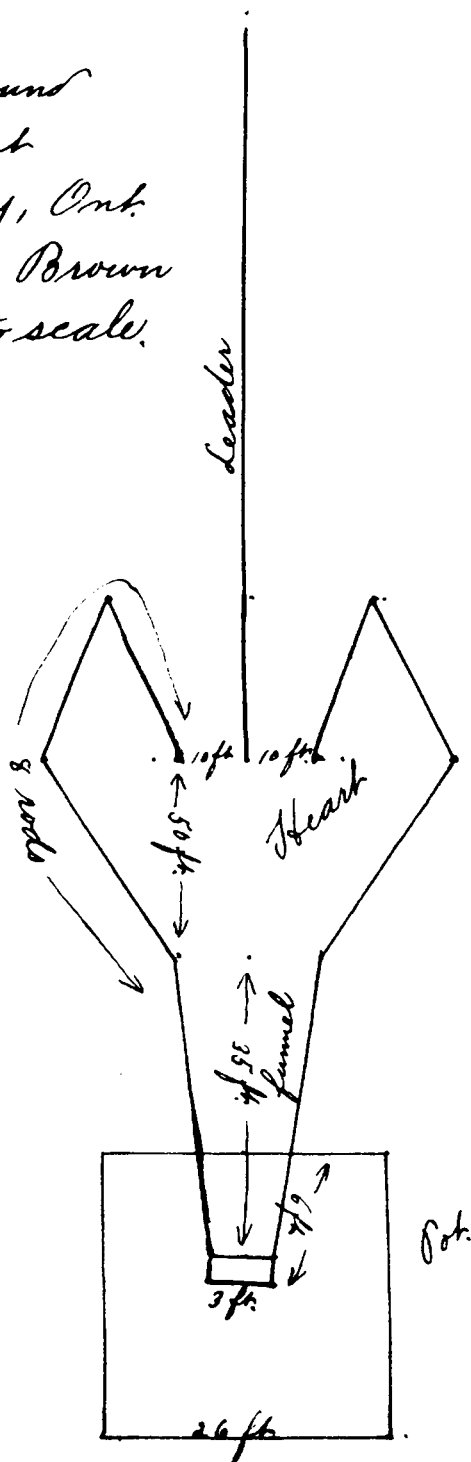
The mesh of the net in the pot is generally 2 inches (ext.) in all parts. Some use 2 1/2 inch mesh in bottom of the pot.

The pound nets are usually set about the first week in April. This year they were not set until the last week in April, the ice or weather being unfavorable. They have been kept down continuously until the close of the fall. Has known them to be kept down as late

Herring Pound
net, about

● Port Stanley, Ont.

See notes Alex. Brown
Not drawn to scale.



as December 5, but that is later than usual.

They have always been in the habit of keeping them down through November until 1892, when they were obliged to remove the nets by orders from Ottawa. Thinks that in 1892 Capt. Ellison put his down again the last of November and fished them for about 10 days more. (Previous to 1892 they were obliged to throw out the whitefish during all or a part of November. See notes under Capt. Ellison).

About 15 years ago there were 2 pounds only at Port Stanley, and 1 at Port Bruce. This was probably only the first or second year pound nets were set on this part of the coast.

Before that time he thinks only drag seines were employed.

There have been 60 pounds in the region between Long Point and Rondeau during about the last 7 years. Ten years ago there were probably only half that number of pounds.

Thinks that pounds have always had to be licenses as they are now.

The rule in this region has been always to fish only one pot to a net or leader. (Several are sometimes placed almost in a line, See under Ellison).

At Port Bruce 4 seines were employed about the time the pounds were introduced. Thinks they were also using seines at Port Stanley at that time, and probably also elsewhere.

The seines took principally herring and blue pickerel, the same as the pound nets do now. Also some black and white bass, maskinonge, catfish, suckers, mullet, perch and sturgeon. Might catch a few whitefish in the spring and fall, but does not think they took any salmon trout.

The seines were used out to a distance of about $1/2$ mile from the shore. The extreme depth of water at this distance was about 25 feet. The bottom on the seining ground con-

sisted of sand and clay. Ther^e are only certain places where the seines can be hauled; where the bottom is sufficiently smooth for that purpose; and such places are quite few.

Used to catch both herring and blue pickerel through the entire season, from spring to fall, but the spring fishing used to be somewhat better than the fall.

Would catch probably more herring in the summer than late in the fall. The herring did not seem to come in more abundantly to any particular spot during the fall, as might have been expected if they came in to spawn.

Caught blue pickerel throughout the entire season, but they were more abundant in the spring than in the summer, and about the same in the fall as in the summer.

There was very little, if any, gill netting at the time the seines were in use. A short gill net may have been used now and then.

At that time did not fish at all beyond a depth of 25 feet.

The herring ran in size then about the same as they do now. Used to get many small ones in the seines, down as short as 6 to 7 inches, but also have been catching these same small ones in the pound nets as late as 2 or 3 years ago. Since then, however, they have not been taking the small ones. Does not know the reason for this.

Used to get only scattering black bass in the seines. Do not get many in the pounds now and never did. This species was never abundant in this region. Maskinonge are also rare, and always have been about here. One is taken occasionally in the pounds.

Mr. Brown has taken more herring this year than ever before, in proportion to the amount of netting in use. During the past 6 weeks the herring have been larger than he has ever taken before, that is in any quantity. Most of them have run as large as 1 pound.

The herring have remained about equally

abundant from year to year for the past six years, as long as he has been fishing steadily. This year, however, he has easily taken $1\frac{1}{4}$ more than during any of the previous 5 years. This applies to his own nets. He could not speak for others in regard to this subject.

He works 7 nets, Has a tug of about 10 tons. They have 7 men altogether.

Stated that he had seen spawn running from an occasional herring at different times during the year. There were probably more spawners in November the latter part of the month, than at any other time, but not many more. (He evidently knew little of this subject).

During previous years of his experience the weight of the herring has been about as 6 or 7 pounds to 1 dozen fish. This year, taking the entire season through, the weight has probably averaged about as 8 pounds, to 1 dozen fish. During the past 6 weeks, however,

the average has been as high as 10 pounds to 1 dozen fish, and a large share of the fish have run almost or quite 1 pound each. Never knew them to run so large before.

All the herring taken about here seem to be the same thing. They are not the cisco, which they do not have here. Get in the course of a season perhaps 1 or 2 specimens of a large herring weighing from 5 to 6 or 7 pounds, which look just like the small ones. Could not say whether they are different or not

It would not be of any benefit to enlarge the mesh of the pound nets. Should the mesh be made large enough to permit the escape of the small fish, it would mesh and destroy immense numbers of small fish. This year he had tried a 3 inch mesh (ext.) in the pot of 2 of his nets. He had to give this mesh up, however, on account of its gilling so many fish. A 2 inch mesh is as large as should be used.

Even a 2 $1/4$ and a 2 $1/2$ inch mesh will gill all the smaller marketable herring, those weighing about $1/2$ pound.

They rarely ever find any fish gilled in the leaders of the pound nets.

The pound nets are taken up for cleaning twice during a season, about July 1 and September 1. All of the netting of the pound is brought ashore at those times, cleaned and retarred.

Have taken very few small fish of any kind this season, not over $1/2$ ton altogether in his 7 nets. The small fish taken in the nets are mostly pickerel. Some years they catch many more than the above amount. The catch of small fish is not limited to any particular period, but extends throughout the season more or less. Of these small unmarketable fish they release alive all they can, but when they are thoroughly mixed up with larger fish they can only bring them ashore with the

others. They cannot be sold and are given away. This small fish would weigh 3 or 4 ounces apiece.

Thinks there are more pickerel now than ever before between Long Point and Rondeau. They have been taken in increased numbers during the past 2 or 3 years.

Mentioned 2 recent large catches of pickerel, one of 11 tons taken from 5 nets at Port Burwell, in one day; and another of 12 tons from 10 nets at Port Bruce in one day. These were, however, extraordinary catches. During several days they may get only a few at each haul.

The pickerel and herring do not run thickly together, and if one species is taken in large numbers in a haul, the other is generally scarce.

The largest catch of herring made this year was 7 tons from his 7 nets during 1 day in July.

The fish secured in the pound nets are all alive when taken from the nets. It is not more than 10 minutes run from their nets to the pier, where the fish are at once packed in ice and generally shipped away on the first train. They have that great advantage over the gill nets, in which the fish may be dead for several hours before they are removed or even a day or more in stormy weather.

About $1/2$ of Mr. Brown's catch goes to the Buffalo Fish Co. The remainder are sold locally. Capt. Ellison probably sells a much larger proportion of his fish locally.

Cannot say that pickerel are any more abundant generally, but here they are apparently just as numerous as ever.

In order to comply explicitly with the new law, as regards the removal of pound nets by November 1, it would be necessary to begin to remove the nets by October 25, and even then they might not succeed in doing so. Might

require on an average about 6 days to remove his 7 nets in moderate weather; somewhat less in very fine weather, and longer in stormy weather. This would mean the loss of a week's fishing in the best time of the year, and before the beginning of the close season.

It would be impossible to remove the tunnel simply on the last day of October. The entire net must be kept taut until removed, as it is fastened mostly together in one or two pieces. To loosen any part would give it the chance to chafe and wear upon the bottom or against the poles. Much harm might be caused thereby especially if a storm should spring up. When they begin to take up a net they must remove it all at one time.

The pounds are generally lifted in the morning from 4 to 7 A. M.

Has lifted his nets 3 times during 24 hours, when fish were very abundant, and never noticed any particular difference in the extent

of the catch at different times of the day.

He could not say whether, as a rule, fish ran more abundant at one time of day than at another

Has seen pickerel in the nets with spawn running the middle of April.

Has never seen any fyke nets used in this region.

Has never seen any bullheads here, such as are taken so abundantly farther east and marketed in Buffalo. Get two species here, one called the mud cat, the other bull pout. Also get the channel cat. Thinks the bull pouts here are different from the bullheads, so-called, of farther east, and has so been told by the Buffalo Fish Co. The bull pouts find no sale. The mud cat and channel cat are sold to Buffalo when obtained.

Get abundance of perch in the pounds, especially during the summer. Two years ago caught 2 tons of perch in one lift of 5 nets.

Very seldom take any black bass.

Considerable sport fishing is done about here during May, and the summer months, especially in June, and principally by visitors. They fish off the piers, and go out to some extent in row boats. Use live minnows and worms as bait. Take perch almost exclusively; very few black bass. There is a very little trolling here for perch and pickerel.

No whitefish gill nets are used about here, except on a very small scale by Capt. Ellison.

In the course of a season may get 15 to 20 tons of whitefish in his 7 pound nets. They average about 5 pounds in weight, and range from $1/2$ pound to 9 pounds, but they are taken occasionally up to 20 pounds. There are never more than a few of the smaller sizes.

Previous to 1892 always threw over board all of the whitefish taken in November. In 1892 the pound nets were entirely removed during that month.

They begin to take whitefish in the pound nets as soon as they are set in the spring. They are most abundant in May, then becoming less so, and not more than a case (shipping case) will be taken during the entire month of June. They seem to leave the shallow waters as soon as the water gets warm. This applies to the region about Port Stanley. In some places whitefish are taken during the summer.

Get the whitefish again off Port Stanley, beginning in October, but they are never abundant through this month, although catches of 100 to 200 pounds are sometimes made.

They begin to be abundant about November 1 to 10. Begin to spawn between November 20 and 25. Only a few scattering ones spawn before that time.

It would not matter much if pound nets were prohibited to fish in December, providing they have to be taken up in November. The December season is very short, and not many

put down their nets again December 1.

Thinks it would only be fair to defer the beginning of the close season to November 10, thus allowing them the first 10 days in November in which to fish. Then not allow the nets to be put in again that season.

Thinks the eggs of the whitefish come to nothing on this shore, which is much exposed, and over which the waves have a long sweep, churning up the water for a long distance out. Storms are numerous here from October onward.

Very young fish, down to a length of 1 or 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches, and which appear to be herring or whitefish are very abundant through all this part of the lake, and they also enter the creek in which he has seen them as far up as the wagon bridge in the town. They school in immense numbers. Occur at the surface, and can be seen down a considerable distance, when the water is clear. The smallest ones are generally at the surface. They seem to keep

lower down as they grow larger. Has seen them out as far as the middle of the lake. Large quantities get into the pounds, but they run through the net when it is hauled. Cannot say that they range larger in size in the fall. See the larger ones also in the spring.

October is the best month of the year for blue pickerel, and it is very hard to be obliged to take up their nets the latter part of the month for the benefit of the whitefish, when they take very few of this species before November.

Do not get many sturgeon in the pounds. The sturgeon average about here about 60 to 70 pounds in weight. They attain sometimes a very much larger size.

Catch a few cusk (eel pout) but there is no sale for them. Have sent them to Buffalo, but they refused to purchase them there.

Had one haul of about 1/2 ton of sheeps-head about 2 weeks ago. A small trade has

been established for them.

The prices they receive for their fish, wholesale, are about as follows:

Herring bring $3/4$ ¢ per pound in Buffalo. Locally they are sold by the piece at the rate of about $1 \frac{1}{4}$ to $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cents per pound.

Pickrel bring 2 cents per pound in Buffalo, and about the same locally, but they cannot find sale for many about here.

Whitefish are mostly sent to Toronto now. And bring them 6 and 7 cents a pound.

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